

and this exercise will help us sharpen our skills,” said Pvt. Thomas Laczynski, Bradley Fighting Vehicle dismount infantry squad member assigned to Company A, 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment.

The exercise, which was held in agreement with the German government and in coordination with the Rhineland Pfalz Interior Ministry, was designed to minimize environmental impact while maximizing maneuver training in rural and small town areas. The 68-ton M1A1 Abrams tanks operated only within the confines of BTA to further reduce environmental impact.

From maneuvering heavy trucks and armored vehicles through the narrow, old-world streets of small, German villages to driving along the fast and furious paced autobahn,

2BCT put its skills to the test.

The soldiers of 2BCT are also prepared to handle any maneuver damage that might occur with teams trained to repair damage to terrain or handle small fuel spills. The German authorities worked hand in hand with 2BCT to control and react to any maneuver damage.

“Maneuvering on the roads of these small towns really requires a lot of teamwork to prevent accidents or property damage,” explained Sgt. Steven Bowden, Bradley Fighting Vehicle gunner assigned to Company A, 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment.

The 2BCT continued to maneuver and hone individual and platoon-level combat skills until Dec. 6, when the Maneuver Coordination Area exercise concluded.



Shoveling dirt turned up by the tracks of Bradley Fighting Vehicles, a soldier from Baumholder's 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, restores the fields overlooking Konken, Germany.



Bradley Fighting Vehicles from 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, wind their way through the town of Konken, Germany, on their way to combat maneuver exercises in the rolling countryside.

Iron cookies help boost morale

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1st Armored Division PAO

WIESBADEN, Germany—They call it “Operation Iron Cookie.” No, it’s not a top-secret mission; it’s a community-wide effort to raise soldier morale during those long guard duty shifts during the increased force protection. The 1st Armored Division’s Support Command chaplain, Chaplain (Maj.) James Foxworth, and his assistant, Staff Sgt. Shawn Kelley, spearheaded the operation.

“We were walking around one day as we visited our troops. We thought we’d take them something to encourage them, to go beyond the ordinary. So we brought them some cookies and some hot cocoa, and I suggested that they call it ‘Iron Cookie,’” said Foxworth.

The troops gladly welcomed Foxworth and Kelley’s oven-baked cookies and refreshments.

“At first, I was surprised to see them out there. We didn’t expect that,” said Spc. Darla Hammonds, an administration specialist from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, DISCOM.



Staff Sgt. Shawn P. Kelley from the 1st Armored Division Support Command Chaplain’s office gives some cookies and words of encouragement to a soldier on guard in the Crestview Housing Area in Wiesbaden, Germany.

Family members, commissary vendors, the USO and family readiness groups all help supply Foxworth and Kelley with everything from sodas to the well-liked cookies.

“I think the soldiers are real positive; you see a smile on their faces. They say, ‘There’s Iron Cookie.’ I think it’s a big encouragement for them. I think the small things you do go a long way,” said Foxworth.

And the soldiers seem to agree.

“All of us look forward to them coming out and we appreciate them very much,” said Pvt. Bradley Lanchester, an administration specialist from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, DISCOM.

Foxworth and Kelley plan to continue their cookie delivery service until the soldiers no longer have to pull guard duty.